

IN THE ODD CORNER.

QUEER AND CURIOUS THINGS AND EVENTS.

Queer Cases of Vessels That Vanish—Passengers Never Reach Their Destination and Are Never Again Heard Of—Showers of Fishes

Fate.

"The sky is cloudy, the rocks are bare; The spray of the tempest is white in air; The winds are out with the waves at play, And I shall not tempt the sea today."

"The trail is narrow, the wood is dim; The path leads to the arching limb; And the lion's whelps are abroad at play, And I shall not join in the chase today."

But the ship sailed safely over the sea, And the hunters came from the chase in glee; And the town that was built upon a rock Was swallowed up in the earthquake shock. —Robert Herrick.

Queer Cases of Vessels.

It seems passing strange considering the enormous amount of ocean traffic carried on nowadays, that it should be possible for a vessel to put out to sea in all condition only to vanish from the face of the waters and leave no indication of its fate. True, there are hundreds of unidentified derelicts floating about the seas, and some of them may be the vessels which have so mysteriously vanished. It is appalling to think of such mysteries as the fates of these vessels, which, setting sail with hundreds of passengers to whom the voyage perhaps promises happiness, wealth and all the joys of life, never reach their destination, and are never again heard of. Take the case of the *Dursey Castle*, a striking example. She vanished, not in midocean, but between the ports of London and Plymouth. Into the latter port she put on her way to Australia. But she never reached Plymouth, and not a living soul knows how or where she vanished. It is most extraordinary that she should have been lost so near to land without so much as a spar being washed ashore to tell of her fearful fate. Equally mysterious is the case of the *Atlantida*. This famous training vessel was stationed off Bermuda with more than 250 souls aboard. Early in 1880 she set sail for a short cruise and from that day to this she has never been heard of.

A very considerable percentage of the vessels which disappeared forever in this mysterious manner were running between England and America at the time. It might be thought that the terrible seas of the vast Atlantic were responsible, but it has been proved that many vessels were lost when the ocean was almost at dead calm. A large sailing ship left New Orleans some years ago for London. "Thrice she was spoken and reported all well, and she was facing equable weather and a smooth sea at the third time. Yet it is known she was lost with all hands within twenty-four hours, and to this day no trace of her has been discovered. In the early part of 1892 a five-masted bark, the *Marla*, a newly constructed vessel, and at that time the third largest in the mercantile marine, set sail in beautiful weather from one of the biggest ports in Cochin China for Hamburg, with every promise of a safe voyage. But she never reached Germany. She vanished shortly after being spoken off the west coast of Africa, and nothing has been found since to indicate the fate that befell her. Another vessel running between England and America which met an end of a kind none but those who shared it ever knew was the first-class steamship *President*. She sailed from New York for a journey to Liverpool in the spring of 1881, having on board a full crew of experienced hands and officers and a distinguished company of passengers. She left New York in fine weather in splendid condition and with no reason for fearing anything she was likely to meet. But she was never spoken and never heard of again, and although fifty-seven years have passed, no one yet knows to what dire calamity her end was due.

How Abyssinians Train for War.

A country of lions and rugged men this Ethiopia, as the people call it, not Abyssinia, which is a disparaging word in use among the Arabs. An Ethiopian worthy to wear in battle the lion's skin that Menelik gives to the bravest must be one who can go three days without food, fighting the while or journeying over deserts and mountains; one who cares nothing for pain or death. It is a custom among these men, after battle or warlike maneuvers, to squat down on the ground in long line and fire their rifles in the air, barrels up, butts between the knees; no blank cartridges here, but bullets that wound or kill whomever they strike in the descent. A cannon shot gives the signal, and forthwith the firing starts far down the line, rolling nearer and nearer, until it swells into a roar of musketry above the emperor himself; then dies away at the farther side. And the bullets come down upon the soldiers or citizens as may be; for this firing, like as not, takes place in a crowded city. "Would it not be wise, your majesty," asked a French traveler, "aghast at this reckless procedure, to use blank cartridges?" "Why so?" asked Menelik. "It would economize rifle balls and save life." "I do not mind losing a few rifle balls, if it makes my people despise them." The Italian found at Adowa what these soldiers think of rifle balls; saw them come bounding on in the charge, pierced through and through with Mauser bullets, and go on fighting; saw the emperor himself toward the close rush in waving his sword, and kill with his own hands. The Abyssinians (to use the accepted word) go into battle with modern rifles, and know how to use them; but in the heat of the action their spirit is to throw these down and come at the enemy man to man with saber and shield. Each one carries on his left arm a convex buckler made of hippopotamus hide, so thick and tough that often a swift flying projectile is deflected by it. Of 21,000 men, blacks and whites, who fought in this battle on the Italian side, about 1,000 escaped, about 2,000 were made prisoners, and the rest were killed. —Winsor Magazine.

An Interesting Plant.

Hashish is the Oriental name of the plant, or rather of the tops and tender parts of the plant, which is scientific-

ly known as *Cannabis Indica*, and which we term Indian hemp. It is cultivated in India, and has long been employed as a medicine in Asia. Arabs, Persians, Indians, Chinese and South Africans esteem it for its intoxicating powers. Various preparations of the plant are employed for the purpose of producing this effect. A favorite mode of extracting its active principle is by boiling the tops and flowers with water, to which butter of oil has been added, evaporating and thus forming an oleaginous solution of fatty substance. The effect produced by hashish is that of happiness, and by that is meant an enjoyment entirely moral and by no means sensual. The hashish eater is happy, not like the gourmand or the fastidious man when satisfying his appetite, or the voluptuary in the gratification of his desires, but like him who hears tidings which fill him with joy. One of the first appreciable effects of the drug is gradual weakening of the power of controlling and directing the thoughts. Then comes the stage already described; and accompanying, and in part following it, there are observed errors of sense, false convictions, and the predominance of one or more extravagant ideas. These ideas and convictions are generally not altogether of an imaginary character, but are suggested by external impressions which are erroneously interpreted by the perceptive faculties. Finally, if the dose is sufficiently powerful, there is a complete withdrawal of the mind from external things.

Rocking-Stones.

Rocking-stones or Logans, as they are called, are numerous in many places in England, Ireland and Scotland, and nearly every other country. One, situated at a place on the island of Magee, in Brown's Bay, Ireland, is popularly believed to acquire a rocking, tremulous motion at the approach of sinners and malefactors. These rocking-stones are large masses of rock so finely poised as to move backward and forward with the slightest impulse. Some of them appear to be natural, others artificial. The former are chiefly granite rocks, in which felspar and porphyry are abundantly present; and these ingredients becoming rapidly decomposed, the dust and sand washed away by rains, what was formerly a solid rock soon assumes the appearance of a group of irregularly shaped pillars having a rhomboidal horizontal section, and separated into portions of horizontal and vertical fissures. As disintegration proceeds, the edges of the blocks forming the pillars become piles of two or more spherical rocks resting upon each other. If, now, a mass of rock be so situated as to preserve its equilibrium in spite of the gradual diminution of its base or point of support, a rocking-stone is the result. The artificial ones appear to have been formed by cutting away a mass of rock around the center point of its base. In Greece, rocking-stones occur as funeral monuments, and are generally found on conspicuous places near the sea. Some rocking-stones occur near to the remains of ancient fortifications, which seems to bear out a statement in one of the poems of Ossian that the bards walked round the stone singing, and made it more as an oracle of the fate of battle.

Making Very Over Death.

In the *National Magazine*, William Jameson Reid, the famous explorer, in the narrative of his dash to the sacred city of Teuchan, Northeastern Tibet, writes thus regarding a certain strange custom of the native savages: "Death, as is but natural where it is of such frequency, is here not looked upon or awaited with fear, and suicides, as stated before, are of frequent occurrence. The funeral ceremony is a function attended with great eclat. Whatever may have been the foibles or frailties of the deceased, or however undeserving he may be of the honor, so soon as he is dead his relatives and friends, from far and near, are summoned to attend the obsequies. The corpse, arrayed in the most gorgeous habiliments that can be procured, and surrounded by his possessions, is seated in a chair and placed in the open air in front of his former dwelling, and for two or three days the body is allowed to remain in this position. During that time the relatives and friends gather round and indulge in mourning dances and in drinking huge quantities of fiery punda, complimenting the corpse on his newly acquired state of blessedness, and expressing the cheerful desire that they might be in his shoes."

Showers of Fishes.

Tropical countries where violent storms, sudden gusts of wind and whirlwinds are most common, often experience showers of fishes. Fish varying in weight from a pound and a half to three pounds have been known to fall in India. Sometimes they are living, but more frequently they are dead and putrefying. They are always of kinds abundant in the sea or fresh waters of the neighborhood, and there can be but little doubt that they are carried up in the air by violent winds, although sometimes fall at a considerable distance from any water which could supply them. There have been instances where falls of fishes have taken place in countries not tropical. A shower of small, three-spined sticklebacks fell near Merthyr-Tydvil, in Wales, sprinkling the ground and houses over an area of at least several square miles, some years ago. They were alive when they fell, yet caught up by a whirlwind from any of the brackish ponds near the sea in which this species abounds, they must have been conveyed through the air a distance of almost thirty miles. At Torrens, in the Isle of Mull, another similar instance occurred, in which herrings were found strewn on a hill five hundred yards from the sea, and one hundred feet above.

Treasures of Ancient Pompeii.

Experts say that the buried city of Pompeii has not yet yielded up half of its artistic treasure; that at the present rate of progress 70 years will elapse before it is thoroughly unearthed.

There is nothing for preserving the body like having no heart.—J. Petit-Senn.

Undeserved praise may often lead us to become really worthy of praise.

THE ARMORED TRAIN IN MODERN WAR.

The important part which the armored train is destined to play in the war of the future has been pretty well shown by the way in which the railway ironclad has been made use of during the struggle now going on between the Boers and the British in South Africa.

The armored train has been a particularly prominent feature in this Transvaal war because of the position of the contestants and the long, unprotected plains along the different boundaries.

The idea of the armored train, however, is by no means a new one, for, although past experiences with such trains in open warfare have revealed little concerning their more or less problematical value as an offensive and defensive factor, trains covered with armor and filled with sharpshooters had been used in the neighborhood of Paris even so early as the Franco-

Prussian war. During the Cuban rebellion the armored train was used quite often by the Spaniards, though the most successful recorded operation of such a train occurred in 1882, when the British fleet was bombarding Alexandria. During this bombardment, Capt. Fisher, an officer in the British navy, conceived the idea of taking an ordinary locomotive and several cars and covering them with good heavy boiler plate. When this was done the train was equipped with field guns, his men with blue jackets from his ship, and then started along the railway line that skirted the coast where the enemy lay in force. When the Egyptian troops were suddenly confronted with this unexpected engine of war, they straightway took to their heels.

Armored trains mounting field pieces and machine guns have been, and for that matter, are even now being used by the American troops engaged in the rounding up of Apinaike and his men. The successful engagement at Calumpit, for instance, was largely attributed to the opportune arrival of such a flying battery on rails. Gen. Lord Kitchener also made frequent use of the armored train in his advance up the Nile. During this Egyptian campaign it was found that rifle bullets fired at short range pierced the plate with which the British cars were armored, so for extra protection sand bags were piled up along each side of the cars, and behind these the sharpshooters of Kitchener were quite invulnerable.

In the armored trains which have been spreading consternation among the belligerent burghers of the Transvaal the locomotive is the only part that does not carry guns. The cars themselves are simply box cars, covered by steel boiler plating three-quarters of an inch in thickness. This is firmly riveted on a steel framework, while the locomotive itself is well incased in the same plating, particular care being taken to protect securely all vital parts of the machinery. Instead of hauling the cars in the usual manner, the locomotive is always placed in the center of the train for the sake of extra protection to such an important part of the flying battery. Portholes are made in the armor plate sides of the car through which to operate the quick-firing and machine guns, with smaller apertures lower down through which the Tommy Atkins sharpshooter pokes his deadly rifle barrel. It requires a very steady aim to send its bullet home from a fast moving train, so the deadliest marksmen are always selected. A powerful railway crane and a strong searchlight are also usually included in the equipment of such a train. When in operation, the armored train is usually preceded by an advance guard of cavalry, regarded as necessary to report on obstructions in the line or to report on obstacles along the line.

The armored cars which Col. Baden-Powell hastily improvised for the protection of Mafeking were simply ordinary flat cars with armored walls made of steel rails firmly bolted together. When the town was invested this officer, it will be remembered, surrounded his position with a railway about which circled his train, well loaded with machine guns and sharpshooters, and held back for a considerable length of time a superior force of the enemy.

Very Wet.

There is a certain amount of comfort in living at a place where you can tell to a nicety just when to expect a shower. This is the case at Panama, where—so says the Churchman—a shower may be looked for every day at about three o'clock in the afternoon. This is the rule all through the rainy season. The morning is clear and the evening, after six o'clock, is delightful, and except from three to six nobody ever thinks of carrying an umbrella. Not so at Colon, only forty-seven miles away. There it rains all the time during the rainy season, and it never rains but it pours. Water comes down by the bucketful. At Panama the annual rainfall is in the neighborhood of nine feet, while that of Colon is twenty-one feet, and it all comes in five months—an average of four feet a month. It is humorously said of Colon that there it takes the people all the rest of the year, after the rainy season, to get dry. In the dry season the heat is intense, the mercury ranging from eighty to ninety degrees, day and night. There is little difference in the temperature after dark, but it is possible to adapt one's self to the conditions of the place, and there is a certain fascination about it that, in

PERILS OF THE CHASE.

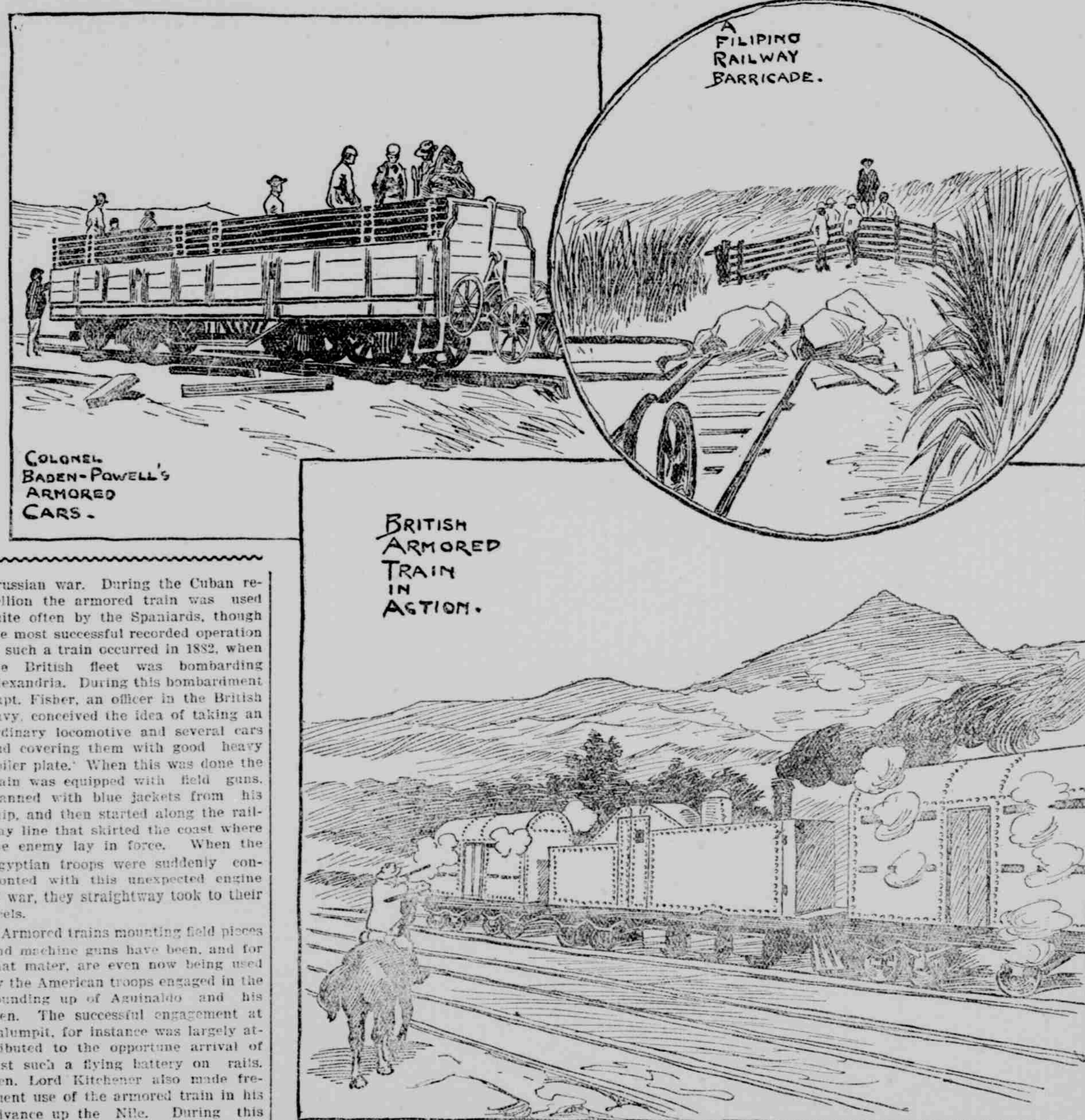
As illustrated by the Drag Hunt of the Meadowbrook Club.

A big flock of geese figured prominently and tragically in the drag hunt of the Meadowbrook club recent. The usual coterie of enthusiasts were in the saddle, and the "throw in" was at East Meadow. The first exciting incident was at the crossing of a high-

Maxwell Stevenson, and, striking him full in the breast, knocked him from the saddle. One of the birds narrowly missed Mrs. J. L. Kernochan. The damage to the flock immediately was settled. The first to reach the geese was Samuel Willets, on his prize hunter Winchester, closely followed by Mrs. Kernochan on Vanity.—New York Press.

A Double Twister.

"What's the matter, old man? Come, don't sit there looking that way. Something's happened, but it won't do you a bit of good to brood over it. Let's go to some funny show and laugh, that's the best thing to do whenever you're troubled of this kind strikes a fellow. None of your folks sick, I hope?" "Oh, no, it's nothing of that kind, and I suppose I'm a fool to give the matter a second thought, but it's pretty hard to get a knock of



COLONEL BADEN-POWELL'S ARMORED CARS.

BRITISH ARMORED TRAIN IN ACTION.

the case of some people, seems to make up for the heat.

Mark Twain On Lies.

Mark Twain, in a recent article, treats of lies, spoken and unspoken, declaring that the silent assertion lie is the more numerous and the less defensible. He recalls Carlyle's statement: "This gospel is eternal—that a lie shall not live," and says: "To me it is plain that he said it in a moment of excitement, when chasing Americans out of his back yard with brickbats. They used to go there and worship. At bottom he was probably fond of them, but he was always able to conceal it. He kept bricks for them, but he was not a good shot, and it is a matter of history that when he fired they dodged, and carried off the brick; for, as a nation, we like lies, and so long as we get them we do not much

way. Here, waiting to see the hunters take the double jump made by the fences, were many spectators in carriages. One countryman was drawn unwillingly by his excited horse directly on the trail. Over the first fence came William C. Hayes, the famous steeplechase rider, on a sleek sorrel thoroughbred, and before he could pull up or turn aside he was right on the farmer. The thoroughbred solved the problem by jumping clear over the farmer's pony and landing safely on the other side. Hayes caught up to the bunch just before the "kill," which, by the way, was a genuine slaughter. At the place where the "kill" was scheduled to take place, on the property of Mrs. J. E. S. Hadden, a large flock of geese were eating corn. The hounds pounced on the flock and made short work of about fifty of them. The remainder took to the wing, one flying straight at the crimson coat of

this kind without showing that you feel it. You know that girl I was telling you about, whose father is the vice-president of the P. D. & Q. railroad? "Oh, yes. The one you met down east this summer? Sent your ring back, has she? Well, didn't I tell you from the first that she would? And I thought you looked upon the matter as nothing but a little lark, anyway?" "I did. It isn't the return of the ring that has upset me. She has not only misspelled my last name, but she hasn't got my initials right on the box in which the ring was sent!" —Chicago Times-Herald.

To Photograph Approaching Storms.

From London has been reported the possibility of foretelling a rainstorm by photography. The Hertz waves, those bearers of electricity on wireless telegraphs, produce a marked effect on the sensitive photographic plates. F. G. Glen demonstrated in the rooms of the Royal Photographic Company of London that these electric waves could be utilized to show the approach of a storm. From experiments it is seen that lightning is not one continuous shaft of light, but is composed of numerous rows of sparks, that follow one another in the same track. This lightning is the cause of electrical waves that are spread out from all sides by each spark. If we use a camera with the same relation to the electrical waves that it has in wireless telegraphy, but of a different shape, and brought before a photographic plate by his arrangement, then the waves of a far distant, approaching storm operate so positively on this film that the impending storm can be foretold with certainty.

Notes of Sympathy.

The technicalities of notes of congratulation and of sympathy are not many. As in all notes, the date and sheet and number should be at the end, unless the address is stamped on the paper. It is poor taste to use fancy note paper at any time, but particularly so when writing to a person recently in mourning. To see a letter of condolence written on bright blue paper, with a white border, for instance, is shocking to refined sensibilities.

Not So Easy a Mark.

Friend—Why do you have such misspelled and ungrammatical signs in your front window? Sharp Tradesman—People think I'm a dunce, and come in to swindle me. Trade's booming!—Stray Stories.

LATEST INDIANA NEWS.

Saved Baby's Life.

About 1 o'clock the other morning Harry Thomas, a hostler for the C. H. & D. railroad, while preparing to back up his team for the Union railway station in Indianapolis, heard the whimpering of a child, accompanied by the barking and whining of a puppy dog, and after hunting around in the darkness he found a 3-year-old boy, clad only in stockings and pajamas, and a little puppy dog, shivering on the railroad track. He carried the youngster to the nearest fire and started an investigation. Meanwhile in the family of Mr. and Mrs. Richard O. Shimer, several blocks away, there was the wildest alarm. The baby had retired nervous and fretful, but finally dropped off to sleep. Shortly after 1 o'clock Mr. Shimer aroused himself to see how the little one was faring, and he found the crib empty and the side door open. It developed that the child crawled out of its crib without awakening the parents, and after opening the door, started off down the railway tracks, accompanied by the little black puppy, always its inseparable companion. The entire neighborhood was enlisted in the search and the wildest alarm prevailed until the whereabouts of the little urchin was discovered. Mr. Shimer is connected with the postoffice.

Carried Six Hundred Miles.

A pouch containing valuable mail for Milford Center, O., was reported by the postmaster as missing. The postal clerk responded that it had been dumped at that place, through which the train passes as a fifty mile grit. This week the pouch was found tightly twisted around the brake of the postal car at Terre Haute, much of its contents missing, the brake beam having torn a hole in the pouch. Investigation showed that the pouch when dumped at Milford Center rebounded and was sucked under the car by the wind, where it twisted around the brake beam in such a manner as to escape the attention of the inspectors at Indianapolis, St. Louis and East St. Louis, and it was only discovered after the car had returned eastward as far as Terre Haute. Among the missing contents is a registered package for Milford Center. Official reports show that the pouch traveled 630 miles before it was found by an inspector.

Reformers in Schoolhouses.

At the annual convention of the Northern Indiana Teachers' association, held some weeks ago, there were present several of the leading educators of the central west. At this meeting it was declared that "inasmuch as frequent bathing is necessary for the maintenance of good health, and as unhealthy people cannot do good work in the schoolroom, it would be well for public school buildings to be fitted with bathing facilities, so that pupils with no opportunity for bathing at home can have this privilege at school." In harmony with this idea the city board of education has decided to equip with bathing facilities the costly new Laurel school building at Mishawaka. While it is a new departure, it is believed to be a step in the right direction, and plans will be formulated for building bathroom additions to the other city school structures.

Farmer Robbed of \$1,023.

The residence of George Hancock, a wealthy farmer nine miles west of New Albany, was robbed Tuesday morning about 3 o'clock of \$1,020. Hancock was assaulted and seriously hurt. Bloodhounds failed to trace the robbers. Hancock's neighbors are highly incensed and if the guilty man are caught they may be lynched. The safe in the store of Jeff Blankenhacker, at Crandall, Harrison county, was also blown open and about \$300 taken. It is thought the men who robbed Hancock did this work also.

Kills His Wife and Himself.

John A. Hoover, an elevator conductor of Indianapolis, aged 24 years, shot his wife twice in the head, fatally wounding her. He then turned the weapon on himself and sent one bullet into his brain and died from the effects of the wound an hour later without recovering consciousness. The crime was the result of a quarrel, begun after midnight, when Hoover returned home. Jealousy on his part was the cause.

Young Man Instantly Killed.

Edwin Hammond, Jr., son of E. P. Hammond of Lafayette, was instantly killed at Roachdale forty miles south of Lafayette. Young Hammond was assisting a woman to get on a train, when he slipped and fell against the trucks. His skull was crushed.

Diplomats.

"I am sorry you asked me for that small loan just now," exclaimed the friend. "It is a coincidence that has developed annoying frequency." "I'm sorry if I have troubled you," said Mr. Fucash. "No trouble, except a sense of disappointment. You see my uncle is always writing me letters of advice. He is continually telling me to learn to say 'no,' and your little request always seems to come just when I am practicing."—Washington Star.

A Schoolboy's Power.

It has been discovered by a writer in the Academy that the ordinary Englishman is averse from the poets because he was made to learn Gray's "Elegy" in his youth. But that all school boys do not know Gray's "Elegy" is quite certain from an answer given in a recent examination. "Chaucer," wrote the sapient youth, "is chiefly famous as the author of 'Gray's Elegy of Ancient Rome.'" "This boy's 'dark, unfathomed caves' of ignorance were not due to poor Gray."

Different Place.

Farmer Hornbeak—Here, you tramp, what are you doin' in my haymow in the middle of the afternoon? Soiled Spooner—Sleepin', boss. Farmer Hornbeak—Wall, git out o' here! This ain't no church.—Judge.

Remembering Those Who Come After: From the Melbourne Weekly Times: "It is well to leave something for those who come after us," as a man said who threw a barrel in the way of a constable who was chasing him.